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Statement of U.S. Rep. Brad Miller on the SOPA Act

Washington, D.C. - I have consistently advocated for a free and open internet. While I understand that copyright infringement and the trafficking of counterfeit and illegal goods are serious issues that need to be addressed in order to protect content creators, the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) creates an enforcement authority that is overbroad and threatens the free and open structure of the Internet. I am opposed to this legislation in its current form.

SOPA (and its Senate companion the PROTECT IP Act) would allow the government to direct internet service providers (ISPs) and operators of other "non-authoritative DNS servers" to block access to internet sites by filtering and redirecting requests made to these servers. There are simple workarounds that make it unlikely that this method would deter bad actors from downloading illegal content, and this ineffective scheme also has important unintended consequences. Internet security experts have pointed out that it would fundamentally undermine twenty years of progress that has been made toward establishing a protocol for secure domain name resolution.

Established companies could also abuse the private right of action to protect profitable business

models by stifling innovation and competition. This could upend the egalitarian nature of the Internet which encourages entrepreneurial endeavors and free access to information. While rights holders and law enforcement need the ability to combat piracy and trafficking in illegal goods, the authorities granted by SOPA are overly broad and will likely result in more harm than good.

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